Status Update: Water Quality Standards in California

Parameter: Cadmium

Status:

- USFWS & NOAA (Services) issued a draft Jeopardy Biological Opinion (BiOp) for California Toxics Rule (CTR) aquatic life cadmium criteria in 2000.
- To avoid a Final Jeopardy BiOp, EPA agreed to develop criteria protective of threatened and endangered species and then amend the CTR to include new criteria.
- In April 2001, EPA revised the CWA 304(a) aquatic life criteria based on new & additional data; new criteria fall within the range acceptable to the Services in the draft & final BiOp.
- In October 2008, the CA State Board proposed & took comment on statewide aquatic life cadmium criteria, consistent with EPA's 2001 revised 304(a) criteria.
- Both EPA's and the State's freshwater cadmium criteria are one of several hardness-dependant metals criteria (i.e., the freshwater criteria are equations that require ambient hardness values, in order to determine ambient criteria values, and a default hardness value when no data exist).
- The CA State Board project is currently stalled, due to limited resources and higher priorities.

Milestones:

- The CA State Board intends to re-propose and take comment on revised aquatic life cadmium criteria.
- The revised criteria will include a separate calculation to determine hardness of ambient waters; hardness values would be applicable to all hardness-dependant metals criteria.
- We will continue to work with the State, and will review their new criteria package.

Projected Dates:

- CA State Board anticipates public review of a revised package & adoption during 2nd Q FY13.

Current & Revised Draft Cadmium Aquatic Life Criteria/Water Quality Standard Values:

- **Current** CTR Cd criteria values (freshwater at hardness of 100 µg/L $CaCO_3$):

	Acute	Chronic
Freshwater	4.3 µg/L dissolved	2.2 µg/L dissolved
Saltwater	42 µg/L dissolved	9.3 µg/L dissolved

- **Revised** EPA/State (proposed) Cd criteria/WQS values (freshwater at hardness of 100 µg/L $CaCO_3$):

	Acute	Chronic
Freshwater	2.0 µg/L dissolved	0.25 µg/L dissolved
Saltwater	40 µg/L dissolved	8.8 µg/L dissolved